

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Application No
PCT/NL2004/000126

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER IPC 7 B65G21/18 B65G15/62		
According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC		
B. FIELDS SEARCHED Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols) IPC 7 B65G F26B		
Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched		
Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used) EPO-Internal		
C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 5 782 340 A (DOLAN REX H) 21 July 1998 (1998-07-21)	1-5, 7-10, 12, 13, 15
Y	the whole document ---	6, 16-21
X	FR 2 695 112 A (INOTEC) 4 March 1994 (1994-03-04) the whole document ---	1, 3-5, 7, 8, 11-14
X	US 6 474 463 B1 (WOELFEL PETER MAXIMILIAN) 5 November 2002 (2002-11-05) the whole document --- -/--	1-5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 15
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patent family members are listed in annex.		
* Special categories of cited documents : *A* document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance *E* earlier document but published on or after the International filing date *L* document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified) *O* document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means *P* document published prior to the International filing date but later than the priority date claimed *T* later document published after the International filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention *X* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone *Y* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art. *&* document member of the same patent family		
Date of the actual completion of the international search 15 June 2004		Date of mailing of the international search report 22/06/2004
Name and mailing address of the ISA European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk Tel (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl, Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016		Authorized officer Silvis, H

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C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	FR 2 735 113 A (GETIN GHISLAINE) 13 December 1996 (1996-12-13) page 3, line 16 - line 19 page 4, line 12 - line 14 page 5, line 18 - line 26; figures 1,5 ----	1-4,9, 10,12
X	DE 34 37 868 A (GEFRA BV MACHINE) 17 April 1986 (1986-04-17) the whole document ----	1,3-5,7, 9,10,12, 13
Y	US 5 590 757 A (SZALANKIEWICZ JAMES J ET AL) 7 January 1997 (1997-01-07) column 7, line 15 - line 41; figures 2,5 ----	6
A		1,3-5,7, 8,11-13
Y	US 4 627 529 A (FORD RICHARD A ET AL) 9 December 1986 (1986-12-09) the whole document ----	16
A		1,2,9, 10,13,15
Y	GB 1 090 630 A (ASHWORTH BROS INC) 8 November 1967 (1967-11-08) page 6, line 93 - line 104; figure 7 ----	17-21
P,X	FR 2 836 135 A (BRUNONE RENE) 22 August 2003 (2003-08-22) the whole document ----	1,3,4,9, 10,12-15 5-8,11
A		
A	US 5 074 407 A (BRUMBY JOHN A) 24 December 1991 (1991-12-24) the whole document ----	1,2.
A	US 4 535 963 A (LACHONIUS LEIF) 20 August 1985 (1985-08-20) ----	
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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

Application No

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Patent document cited in search report		Publication date	Patent family member(s)		Publication date
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GB 816291	A	08-07-1959	NONE		

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY


(Chapter II of the Patent Cooperation Treaty)

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

REC'D 21 SEP 2005

WIPO

PCT

Applicant's or agent's file reference 1.004.022 WO		FOR FURTHER ACTION		See Form PCT/PEA/416
International application No. PCT/NL2004/000126		International filing date (day/month/year) 19.02.2004		Priority date (day/month/year) 24.06.2003
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC B65G21/18				
Applicant TOWNSEND ENGINEERING B.V.				
<p>1. This report is the international preliminary examination report, established by this International Preliminary Examining Authority under Article 35 and transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.</p> <p>2. This REPORT consists of a total of 5 sheets, including this cover sheet.</p> <p>3. This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, comprising:</p> <p>a. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> sent to the applicant and to the International Bureau a total of 10 sheets, as follows:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis of this report and/or sheets containing rectifications authorized by this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> sheets which supersede earlier sheets, but which this Authority considers contain an amendment that goes beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed, as indicated in item 4 of Box No. I and the Supplemental Box.</p> <p>b. <input type="checkbox"/> (sent to the International Bureau only) a total of (indicate type and number of electronic carrier(s)) , containing a sequence listing and/or tables related thereto, in computer readable form only, as indicated in the Supplemental Box Relating to Sequence Listing (see Section 802 of the Administrative Instructions).</p>				
<p>4. This report contains indications relating to the following items:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box No. I Basis of the opinion</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Box No. II Priority</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box No. V Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box No. VI Certain documents cited</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application</p>				
Date of submission of the demand 21.04.2005		Date of completion of this report 22.09.2005		
Name and mailing address of the International preliminary examining authority:  European Patent Office - P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL-2280 HV Rijswijk - Pays Bas Tel. +31 70 340 - 2040 Tx: 31 651 epo nl Fax: +31 70 340 - 3016		Authorized Officer Silvis, H Telephone No. +31 70 340-3021		



**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT
ON PATENTABILITY**

International application No.
PCT/NL2004/000126

Box No. I Basis of the report

1. With regard to the **language**, this report is based on the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.
- ☒ This report is based on translations from the original language into the following language English, which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of:
- ☒ international search (under Rules 12.3 and 23.1(b))
 - ☐ publication of the international application (under Rule 12.4)
 - ☐ international preliminary examination (under Rules 55.2 and/or 55.3)
2. With regard to the **elements*** of the international application, this report is based on *(replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report)*:

Description, Pages

1-6

filed with telefax on 21.04.2005

Claims, Numbers

1-21

filed with telefax on 21.04.2005

Drawings, Sheets

1/3-3/3

as originally filed

- ☐ a sequence listing and/or any related table(s) - see Supplemental Box Relating to Sequence Listing
3. ☐ The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:
- ☐ the description, pages
 - ☐ the claims, Nos.
 - ☐ the drawings, sheets/figs
 - ☐ the sequence listing (*specify*):
 - ☐ any table(s) related to sequence listing (*specify*):
4. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments annexed to this report and listed below had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(c)).
- ☐ the description, pages
 - ☐ the claims, Nos.
 - ☐ the drawings, sheets/figs
 - ☐ the sequence listing (*specify*):
 - ☐ any table(s) related to sequence listing (*specify*):

* If item 4 applies, some or all of these sheets may be marked "superseded."

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT
ON PATENTABILITY**

International application No.
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Box No. V Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Yes: Claims	1-21
	No: Claims	
Inventive step (IS)	Yes: Claims	
	No: Claims	1-21
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes: Claims	1-21
	No: Claims	

2. Citations and explanations (Rule 70.7):

see separate sheet

Box No. VI Certain documents cited

1. Certain published documents (Rule 70.10)

and /or

2. Non-written disclosures (Rule 70.9)

see separate sheet

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
REPORT ON PATENTABILITY
(SEPARATE SHEET)**

International application No.

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Re Item V

**Reasoned statement with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability;
citations and explanations supporting such statement**

Reference is made to the following documents:

- D1: FR-A-2 695 112 (INOTEC) 4 March 1994 (1994-03-04)
- D2: US-A-5 782 340 (DOLAN REX H) 21 July 1998 (1998-07-21)
- D3: US-A-5 590 757 (SZALANKIEWICZ JAMES J ET AL) 7 January 1997 (1997-01-07)
- D4: US-A-4 627 529 (FORD RICHARD A ET AL) 9 December 1986 (1986-12-09)
- D5: GB-A-1 090 630 (ASHWORTH BROS INC) 8 November 1967 (1967-11-08)

1 LACK OF INVENTIVE STEP

1.1 The present application does not meet the criteria of Article 33(1) PCT, because the subject-matter of claim 1 does not involve an inventive step in the sense of Article 33(3) PCT.

1.2 Document D1, which is considered to represent the most relevant state of the art, discloses:
a guide for supporting a displaceable object, comprising:
- a guide profile *made from a material having a low friction coefficient*; and
- a support structure supporting the guide profile,
wherein the guide profile is engaged at least at two spaced-apart positions by the support structure, at least one engaging position of which consists of a free support of the guide profile on the support structure such that at that position the guide profile is displaceable relative to the support structure, whereby the guide profile is free of the support structure between the spaced-apart positions where the support structure contacts the guide profile,
from which the subject-matter of claim 1 differs in that the material having a low friction coefficient is specified to be *plastic*.

1.3 This difference with claim 1 of the present application cannot be considered as

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REPORT ON PATENTABILITY
(SEPARATE SHEET)**

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involving an inventive step (Article 33(3) PCT) for the following reason.

A guide profile made out of plastic is known from document D2 in a similar structure and for a similar purpose. Hence, no inventive step is present in the subject-matter of claim 1.

2 DEPENDENT CLAIMS

2.1 Dependent claims 2-21 do not contain any features which, in combination with the features of any claim to which they refer, meet the requirements of the PCT in respect of inventive step, see documents

D1 for claims 11,14,

D2 for claims 2-5,7-10,12,13,15,

D3 for claim 6,

D4 for claim 16,

D5 for claims 17-21.

Re Item VI

Certain documents cited

Certain published documents

Application No Patent No	Publication date (day/month/year)	Filing date (day/month/year)	Priority date (valid claim) (day/month/year)
FR-2836135	22.08.2003	18.02.2002	

Amended application PCT/NL2004/000126
as filed with letter dated 21 April 2005

Guide, assembled guide and device for conditioning products displaceable along a guide track

5 The invention relates to a guide for supporting a displaceable object, according to the preamble of claim 1. The invention also relates to an assembled guide provided with a plurality of guides according to the invention connecting onto each other. Finally, the invention further relates to a device for conditioning products displaceable along a guide track.

10 In the displacement of products at a production location or a location where the products are processed, large-scale use is made of guides over which the products can slide directly or via a product carrier. In order to control the friction resistance and wear, use is made in the prior art of metal guides which are partially covered by plastic guide profiles. The drawbacks of such guides covered with plastic is that they are relatively
15 costly and are in addition difficult to clean, particularly at the position where the plastic guide profiles lie against the metal guide. This can result in problems in respect of hygiene, especially in conditions where perishable goods are present. A device for conditioning (food) products displaceable along a guide track should be particularly envisaged here, such as drying towers, cooling towers, freezing towers, smoking spaces,
20 curing rooms, other cooling or heating spaces, and so on.

U.S. Patent 5,782,340 discloses a tapered side support comprising a wear strip for guiding and supporting a plastic belt. The wear strip is mounted on the top edge portion of a side plate. The wear strip connects to the side plate with a longitudinal slot in which
25 the side plates can partly be inserted. A further fixation between the wear strip and the side plate is provided by a transverse pin embedded in the wear strip and being receivable in notches provided in the edge of the side plate. Also in this construction the assembled wear strips and side plates are difficult to clean especially at the contact area of the wear strip and side plate.

30

The invention has for its object to provide a guide and a device for conditioning products displaceable along a guide track which combines the advantages of the prior art guides and devices with better controllable hygienic conditions.

The invention provides for this purpose a guide profile as according to claim 1. The guide profile, which is at least substantially form-retaining, can thus be held in position without a contact surface of considerable size being required. The contact between the support structure and the plastic can be minimized with only a few placed-apart
5 engaging positions. This enables a good cleaning of both components. A problem which can occur due to the small contact (in area) between the support structure, which will normally be manufactured from metal, and plastic is that the differing coefficients of expansion of the support structure and the plastic result in an uncontrollable orientation of the plastic guide part (guide profile) relative to the generally stationary support
10 structure, particularly in conditions of changing temperatures. However, the free support obviates this problem of controllable orientation of the guide profile as a result of only limited contact between support structure and plastic guide profile. When the guide profile is coupled rigidly on one side to the support structure, the orientation of the guide profile is fixed on one side, and all relative deformation of the guide profile which
15 occurs relative to the support structure is compensated by the free support. Free support is here understood to mean a support where the relative orientation is not fixed; the separate elements are displaceable relative to each other.

In order to also control the orientation of the guide profile (particularly in directions
20 other than the longitudinal direction of the guide profile) as well as possible at the position where it supports freely on the support structure, in a preferred variant the guide profile is provided with a three-dimensional contact surface, and/or the support structure is provided with a three-dimensional contact surface at the position where the guide profile supports freely thereon. The ability to control the relative positioning of
25 the guide profile and the support structure is increased by making use of a one or two-sided three-dimensional contact surface.

In a particular preferred variant, the free support of the guide profile on the support structure is formed by a recess in the guide profile in which an engaging part of the
30 support structure engages close-fittingly and displaceably. A free space can herein be enclosed between the engaging part of the support structure and a part of the recess on the side remote from the engaging part, in which recess the engaging part is axially displaceable. This construction means that length variation of the plastic guide profile relative to the support structure does not result in build-up of stress in the plastic guide

profile. The engaging part will after all displace in the guide profile when there is such a relative change in the dimensions. The result is that a controllable orientation of the plastic guide profile remains possible even in the case of considerable relative change in the dimensions of the guide profile and the support structure.

5 The orientation of the guide surface of the guide profile is particularly important for proper operation of the guide. It is therefore advantageous when the recess with the engaging part displaceable therein are formed such that the direction of displacement of the engaging part relative to the recess is at least substantially parallel to the guide
10 surface of the plastic guide part. Build-up of stress parallel to the guide surface can in particular be prevented in this way.

A further advantage of the guide according to the invention is that contamination, also at the engaging positions of the support structure on the plastic guide profile, is not
15 possible, or hardly so, owing to the tight fit of the engaging part of the support structure in the recess in the guide profile. Favourable results have been achieved with a slotted space between the engaging part and the inside of the recess (which can also be referred to as tolerance or clearance) of a maximum of 3 mm, preferably less than 1 mm.

20 It is found in practice that a sufficient strength of the plastic guide profile can be obtained at limited cost when the guide profile is manufactured from a high-molecular polyethylene. It will however generally be necessary here to give the plastic guide profile a relatively voluminous form (for instance beam-like). The support structure can be manufactured from metal.

25 In a preferred embodiment, the engaging part of the support structure and a recess co-acting therewith in the guide profile are at least substantially cylindrical. A cylinder shape can be manufactured relatively easily (drilling and turning for instance come to mind here) and has a surface which is relatively easy to clean and in which
30 contaminants cannot adhere. Bolts, screws and such fastening means for fastening the profile are unnecessary. A stable support of the guide profile can be obtained when this latter is provided with engaging positions on opposite sides.

The invention also provides an assembled guide provided with a plurality of mutually connecting guides as described above, wherein a plurality of guide profiles are placed connecting with a gap to each other. The free spaces between the guide profiles are provided to compensate length changes in the individual guide profiles without affecting adjacent guide profiles. Advantageous results can be obtained with a gap which can be used for expansion of between 5 and 35 mm between a profile part and a support structure at atmospheric temperature, in particular when guide profiles are applied of high-molecular polyethylene with a length between 200 and 1200 mm. A plurality of profile parts can herein be engaged by a single support structure. This creates a direct connection between the individual profile parts. A particular variant of the assembled guide is provided with the plurality of profile parts which together form a helical guide track. Such a spiral-shaped guide track makes it possible to realize a long transport route in a limited space, which is advantageous for instance in towers for cooling, heating, smoking and/or otherwise conditioning products with a relatively long treatment time.

The invention further provides a device for conditioning products displaceable along a guide track, comprising: an assembled guide as described above, displacing means for displacing the products for conditioning along the guide, a housing at least partially enclosing the assembled guide and the displacing means, and conditioning means for regulating the atmosphere in the housing. The conditioning means can for instance comprise temperature-regulating means. In a particularly advantageous variant, the assembled guide comprises a vertically oriented, helical conveyor track with a housing placed therearound, wherein in the helical conveyor track there can be placed a rotatable core, through rotation of which a conveyor belt carried by the conveyor track can be driven. Such a guide track can advantageously be applied in the meat-processing industry, wherein for instance an endless conveyor track manufactured from metal components is displaced over the assembled guide. The advantages as already described above with reference to the guide according to the invention can thus be realized.

The invention will be further elucidated with reference to the non-limitative exemplary embodiments shown in the following figures, in which:
figure 1A is a perspective, exploded view of a part of a support structure and a guide profile according to the present invention,

figure 1B is a perspective view of the part of the support structure and the guide profile shown in figure 1A in assembled state,

figure 2 is a perspective, exploded view of a part of an alternative embodiment of a support structure and a guide profile according to the present invention,

5 figure 3 is a perspective view of a part of an assembled guide according to the present invention in assembled state,

figure 4 is a perspective view of a spiral tower according to the present invention, and

figure 5 is a perspective view of yet another embodiment of a support structure and a guide profile according to the present invention.

10

Figure 1A shows a beam-like plastic guide profile 1 provided with a guide surface 2.

The end walls 3 of guide profile 1, only one of which is visible in the figure, are

provided with cylindrical openings 4 arranged for co-action with cylindrical pins 5

carried by frame parts 6. Openings 4 are given a depth such that guide profile 1 can be

15 pushed so far onto an associated pin 5 with one of the openings 4 that the opposite pin 5

can be pushed into the opening 4 co-acting therewith. A situation is thus obtained as

shown in figure 1B; guide profile 1 is suspended from pins 5. Pins 5 herein have

sufficient space in axial direction in openings 4 to compensate expansion (length

increase) of guide profile 1. Conversely, pins 5 penetrate sufficiently far into openings 4

20 to compensate shrinkage (length decrease) of guide profile 1.

Figure 2 shows an alternative embodiment variant of a plastic guide profile 7 provided

with a guide surface 8 which is provided on an end wall 9 with a recess 10 adapted for

co-action with a pin 11 connected to a frame 12 (as in the connection with pins 5 and

25 openings 4 shown in figures 1A and 1B). Guide profile 7 is provided on the underside

with a slot-like opening 13 into which a pin 14 fits in a manner such that a change in the

length of guide profile 7 is possible without build-up of stress in the guide profile. For

this purpose the slot 13 can displace in horizontal direction relative to pin 14.

30 Figure 3 shows an assembled guide 15 provided with a plurality of successively placed

guide profiles 16. Guide profiles 16 are coupled on the end walls to a frame 18 with

pins 17 as according to the construction as described with reference to figures 1A and

1B. Profile parts 16 are additionally supported by pins 24 likewise connected to frame

18. Guide profiles 16 are successively placed such that guide surfaces 19 connect to

Claims

1. Guide for supporting a displaceable object, comprising:
- a plastic guide profile (1, 7, 16, 30), and
 - a support structure (5, 6, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 24, 31, 32, 34) supporting the guide profile (1, 7, 16, 30),
- wherein the guide profile (1, 7, 16, 30) is engaged at least at two spaced-apart positions (4, 10, 13, 33) by the support structure (5, 6, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 24, 31, 32, 34), at least one engaging position (4, 10, 13, 33) of which consists of a free support of the guide profile (1, 7, 16, 30) on the support structure (5, 6, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 24, 31, 32, 34) such that the freely supporting side of the guide profile (1, 7, 16, 30) is displaceable relative to the support structure (5, 6, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 24, 31, 32, 34), characterised in that the guide profile (1, 7, 16, 30) is free of the support structure (5, 6, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 24, 31, 32, 34) between the spaced-apart positions (4, 10, 13, 33) where the support structure (5, 6, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 24, 31, 32, 34) contacts the guide profile (1, 7, 16, 30).
2. Guide as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the guide profile (1, 7, 16, 30) is coupled rigidly on one side to the support structure (5, 6, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 24, 31, 32, 34).
3. Guide as claimed in claim 1 or 2, characterized in that the guide profile (1, 7, 16, 30) is provided with a three-dimensional contact surface (4, 10, 13, 33) at the position where it supports freely on the support structure (5, 6, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 24, 31, 32, 34).
4. Guide as claimed in any of the foregoing claims, characterized in that the support structure (5, 6, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 24, 31, 32, 34) is provided with a three-dimensional contact surface (5, 11, 14, 17, 34) at the position where the guide profile (1, 7, 16, 30) supports freely thereon.
5. Guide as claimed in any of the foregoing claims, characterized in that the free support of the guide profile (1, 7, 16, 30) on the support structure (5, 6, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 24, 31, 32, 34) is formed by a recess (4, 10, 13, 33) in the guide profile (1, 7, 16, 30)

in which an engaging part (5, 11, 14, 17, 34) of the support structure (5, 6, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 24, 31, 32, 34) engages close-fittingly and displaceably.

6. Guide as claimed in any of the foregoing claims, characterized in that a free space is enclosed between the engaging part (5, 11, 14, 17, 34) of the support structure (5, 6, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 24, 31, 32, 34) and a part of the recess (4, 10, 13, 33) on the side remote from the engaging part (5, 11, 14, 17, 34), in which recess (4, 10, 13, 33) the engaging part is axially displaceable.

7. Guide as claimed in any of the foregoing claims, characterized in that the guide profile (1, 7, 16, 30) is provided with a guide surface (2, 8, 19) and the recess (4, 10, 13, 33) with the engaging part (5, 11, 14, 17, 34) displaceable therein are formed such that the direction of displacement of the engaging part (5, 11, 14, 17, 34) relative to the recess (4, 10, 13, 33) is at least substantially parallel to the guide surface (2, 8, 19).

8. Guide as claimed in any of the foregoing claims, characterized in that the tight fit of the engaging part (5, 11, 14, 17, 34) of the support structure (5, 6, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 24, 31, 32, 34) in the recess (4, 10, 13, 33) in the guide profile (1, 7, 16, 30) leaves free a slotted space between the engaging part (5, 11, 14, 17, 34) and the inside of the recess (4, 10, 13, 33) of a maximum of 3 mm, preferably less than 1 mm.

9. Guide as claimed in any of the foregoing claims, characterized in that the guide profile (1, 7, 16, 30) is manufactured from a high-molecular polyethylene.

10. Guide as claimed in any of the foregoing claims, characterized in that the support structure (5, 6, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 24, 31, 32, 34) is manufactured from metal.

11. Guide as claimed in any of the foregoing claims, characterized in that the engaging part (5, 11, 14, 17, 24) of the support structure (5, 6, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 24, 31, 32, 34) and a recess (4, 10, 13, 33) co-acting therewith in the guide profile (1, 7, 16, 30) are at least substantially cylindrical.

12. Guide as claimed in any of the foregoing claims, characterized in that the guide profile (1, 7, 16, 30) is provided on opposite sides (3) with engaging positions (4, 10, 13, 33).

5 13. Assembled guide (15) provided with a plurality of mutually connecting guides as claimed in any of the foregoing claims, wherein a plurality of guide profiles (1, 7, 16, 30) are placed connecting with a gap to each other.

10 14. Assembled guide (15) as claimed in claim 13, characterized in that the gap between the profile parts is between 5 and 35 mm at atmospheric temperature.

15 15. Assembled guide (15) as claimed in claim 13 or 14, characterized in that a plurality of profile parts (1, 7, 16, 30) are engaged by a single support structure (5, 6, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 24, 31, 32, 34).

16. Assembled guide (15) as claimed in any of the claims 13-15, characterized in that the plurality of profile parts (1, 7, 16, 30) form a helical guide track (22).

17. Device for conditioning products displaceable along a guide track (22),
20 comprising:
- an assembled guide (15) as claimed in any of the claims 13-16,
- displacing means for displacing the products for conditioning along the guide (15),
- a housing (23) at least partially enclosing the assembled guide (15) and the displacing means, and
25 - conditioning means for regulating the atmosphere in the housing (23).

18. Device as claimed in claim 17, characterized in that the conditioning means comprise temperature-regulating means.

30 19. Device as claimed in claim 17 or 18, characterized in that the assembled guide (15) comprises a vertically oriented, helical conveyor track (22) with a housing (23) placed therearound.

21. Device as claimed in any of the claims 17-20, characterized in that the
5 displacing means comprise a driven endless conveyor track (22).